

# NEWCASTLE-EMLYN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Public Health Report for 1953

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—

I beg to submit my annual report for the year ended December 31st, 1953.

### SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area : 208 acres. Population, 768. Number of inhabited houses, 260. Rateable Value, £3,176. Product of a penny rate, £12 2s. 0.9d.

Newcastle-Emllyn is a residential and market town situated in the Teifi Valley in West Carmarthenshire, serving the needs of a scattered agricultural community living in the adjacent countryside which includes parts of South Cardiganshire and North Pembrokeshire. A milk products factory, shirt factory, egg grading station, an omnibus depot, and various shops and business concerns provide employment for a good number. There is one primary school in the area. The town possesses excellent facilities for the marketing of animals, and marts are held regularly. It is, in addition, a popular tourist and fishermen's resort and there is an influx of visitors during the holiday season. A fair proportion of residents have come to live here in retirement. Development of the town has been impaired by the smallness of the urban district.

### VITAL STATISTICS

**BIRTHS.** Total live births : 2 females, one being illegitimate, giving a crude birth-rate of 2.6 per 1,000. The standardised birth-rate used for comparison with the birth-rate in other areas, and calculated with the aid of a Comparability Factor provided by the Register General, was 2.9 per 1,000. The birth-rate for England and Wales was 15.5 per 1,000. There were no still births and no deaths of infants under four weeks or one year of age. The still-birth rate for England and Wales was 0.35 per 1,000.

**DEATHS.** Deaths during the year were as follows : 2 males and 7 females,—total 9, giving a crude death-rate of 11.7 per 1,000. The standardised death-rate (Comparability Factor .81) was 9.4 per 1,000. The death-rate for England and Wales was 11.4 per 1,000. Average age at death : 65.5 years.

Causes of death.	Males.	Females.
Malignant growth, uterus .. ..	0	1
Other malignant growths .. ..	0	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system .. ..	0	1
Heart disease .. ..	0	3
Circulatory disease .. ..	1	0
Pneumonia .. ..	0	1
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum .. ..	1	0
Total ..	2	7

### PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

**Hospital, laboratory and ambulance facilities.** The district is served mainly by the West Wales General Hospital, Carmarthen (20 miles

distant); Cardigan Hospital (10 miles); Aberystwyth Hospital (35 miles); with provision for cases of infectious diseases at Tumble Isolation Hospital. The nearest treatment centre for venereal disease is Llanelli. The Public Health Laboratory at Carmarthen plays a vital part in the maintenance of health in West Wales and is always ready to assist medical practitioners in the investigation of disease. Transport facilities are provided by ambulances based at Carmarthen and Llandyssul, the service being under the control of the County Council.

**Home Nursing, Midwifery and Infant Welfare.** Home nursing and midwifery are undertaken by one district nurse/midwife who is resident in the town. The County Council provides one health visitor for Newcastle Emlyn and adjacent villages. An Infant Welfare Clinic is held here fortnightly.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES

An outbreak of measles occurred during the winter, 19 cases being notified. There were no deaths. One case each of ophthalmia neonatorum and of pneumonia were notified and the latter died. Towards the end of the year (November) there was a minor outbreak of chicken pox in the town. No cases of diphtheria or of food poisoning were reported.

## TUBERCULOSIS

The number of cases on the register at the beginning and end of the year are as follows:—

Date.	Pul- monary	Non-pul- monary.	Total.
January 1, 1953 .....	6 males, 2 females .....	1 female ....	9
December 31, 1953 .....	7 males, 2 females .....	2 females ....	11

Two fresh cases of tuberculosis, one pulmonary and one non-pulmonary, both in the 15-25 age group, were reported during the year. There were no deaths from the disease. The Mass Radiography Unit visited the town for three days in April, advance publicity having been arranged through posters, loud-speakers, etc. The response was very good, over 600 adults attending for examination. A Chest Clinic is held at Newcastle-Emlyn twice a month when a specialist examines any cases referred by local medical practitioners.

## SANITARY CONDITIONS

**HOUSING.** The housing shortage in Newcastle-Emlyn remains acute, no houses having been built by this Authority during the year and there are none in course of erection. Discussions regarding the erection of further permanent houses on the New Road site are proceeding and it is probable that an additional four to six houses will be built there. In order to meet present demands and to plan for the future, however, larger building sites are necessary and should be acquired.

**WATER SUPPLY.** The town is provided with an ample supply of wholesome water throughout the year. The work of replacement of the old crowded mains continues, the Quarry Ffynant main having been relaid during the year. Samples of the raw water are sent periodically to the Public Analyst at Carmarthen and the reports received remain satisfactory.

## Administration of Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948

Routine duties performed by the Sanitary Inspector during 1933 in connection with the above Acts were as follows :

Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health. Part I of the Act;—

Premises.	Number on Register.	Number of Inspections.	Number of Written Notices.	Occupiers Prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by Local Authority ..	3	3	0	0
(2) Factories not included above in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority ..	23	9	0	0
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority ..	0	0	0	0
Total ..	26	12	0	0

Cases in which defects were found : nil. Part VIII of the Act : Out-work : nil.

### SEWERAGE

No new work was undertaken during the year, but minor repairs were made as required. The present system is an old one but it continues to function without serious breakdown. A number of cottages in the town are without a water carriage system.

### SCAVENGING AND RODENT CONTROL

I am pleased to report that the Council purchased a new covered-in refuse lorry this year and henceforth the work of scavenging will be performed by our own workmen. Refuse is collected once weekly and dumped a few hundred yards outside the town. This dumping site, adjoining the main Cardigan road and the river and in close proximity to the town, is an eyesore and its closure has been frequently discussed, but so far no alternative site has been found. The disposal of household refuse by tipping on suitable land, hollows, or disused quarries is the only course available in rural area. I would like to emphasise, however, that these tips can be rendered safe by strict adherence to Ministry of Health rules which require (a) a periodic sealing of the dump with earth, (b) no refuse to be deposited in water, (c) no tins or loose debris to be left exposed and (d) all precautions to be taken to prevent the breeding of flies and vermin. With regard to the latter stipulation, I may state that the Council employs a rodent operator on a part-time basis and the dumping ground is baited regularly.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

**S. ROBERTS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., L.M.S.B.A.,**  
Medical Officer of Health.

